loss of almost the equal amount of profit within the first six months of the current financial year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for sudden fall in its profits; and

(d) what measures have been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) Indian Airlines has made a net loss of Rs. 34.90 crores during the first half of the current financial year 1998-99 as against a loss of over Rs. 22 crores for the same period during the year 1997-98. The performance of the current financial year is in consonance with the past trend. Traffic in the aviation industry is subject to low and peak seasons. The first six months are considered low season when usually traffic is low and losses are incurred. These losses are generally made good by the high traffic and earnings made in the following six months i.e. October to March, which are considered to be a peak season of festivals and winter months.

(d) The Company is making continuous and vigorous efforts to bring economy in expenditure and improve its productivity to the maximum extent possible.

Synergisation of Operations of AI and IA

1397. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) it is a fact that Government plans a progressive synergising of AI and IA;

(b) whether the aim of this synergisation is to reduce the operating costs and compliment each other; and

(c) what are the broad details of the plan and when will it be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIAITON (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. With a view to optimise utilisation of the resources and to improve operational and financial efficiency. the Government has issued a directive in December, 1998, advising both the airlines to (i) Rationalise schedules; (ii) Establish common rated fares; (iii) Expand code share arrangements; (iv) Maintain common offices/GSAs as far as possible; (v) Explore the possibilities of leasing in and leasing out of capacity to/from each other at the going market rates; (vi) Undertake joint advetisement promotion, marketing activities; and (vii) Coordinate ground handling of flights and related activities.

Synergy process in the above mentioned areas is continuing.

Air Services to Purnia

1398. SHRI JANARDAN YADAV: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to introduce Flights from Purnia to other parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) Government has laid down route dispersal guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country. It is, however, up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by Government.